

Retired supercomputers enable student research

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Nothing like it in the world

A new facility, dedicated Oct. 18 at the Los Alamos Research Park, uses decommissioned Laboratory supercomputers to give systems researchers and students a one-of-a-kind, hands-on lab to learn computational science—perhaps unlocking secrets to designing the next generation of supercomputers.

The Parallel Reconfigurable Observational Environment, or PRObE center, contains more than 1,000 computers and 2,000 cores from retired Los Alamos systems named Coyote and Cuda.

More computers will be added as open, unclassified systems are retired. The center was the brainchild of Gary Grider, acting division leader for High Performance

Computing, and assisted by Garth Gibson at Carnegie Mellon University. The facility will be available to researchers from U.S. universities as well as to summer undergraduate students through the Los Alamos Institutes.

Large scale research

No other facility exists in the world for students and researchers to work out the complexities in designing and testing concepts for supercomputers at this large scale.

“One of the beauties of the PRObE center is providing the opportunity to learn by doing,” said Lab Director Charlie McMillan. “If you don’t have the opportunity to work on real hardware, you don’t really get the chance to see how different configurations will work at scale.”

The PRObE center is funded by a \$10 million grant from the National Science Foundation and is operated by the New Mexico Consortium and collaborators at LANL, Carnegie Mellon University, and the University of Utah.

For more information, see the [news release](#) from the New Mexico Consortium.

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